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Briefing Paper with Suggested Talking Points  
for the President's Conversation with Mikoyan

Previous Contact with Mikoyan

According to available Government sources and Soviet press accounts, the President and Mikoyan were in the same gatherings on two occasions during the President's visit to Moscow in 1945; on the Lenin Mausoleum during a parade review and at Stalin's Kremlin reception. The records do not reveal whether the President had the opportunity to engage Mikoyan in conversation. No record has been found of any other occasion at which the President might have met Mikoyan.

Mikoyan's Tour of the United States

A review of Mr. Mikoyan's reported public statements during his various visits to American cities indicates that his primary theme has been that peace between the United States and the Soviet Union is possible if we can talk to each other and get to know each other better. He emphasizes, however, that the United States must play its part in advancing the cause of peace by being responsive to Soviet initiatives or by advancing proposals of its own. Regarding Berlin, he has insisted that the Soviet proposals are "reasonable," represent a compromise and provide a basis for negotiation. In the context of the peace theme, Mr. Mikoyan has recommended an expansion of US-Soviet trade and discontinuance of US trade controls and has referred to the number of American tourists visiting the USSR and the possibility that Soviet travel restrictions on Americans within the Soviet Union and Soviet jamming of Western radio broadcasts might some day be discontinued. A second major theme has been that the United States should treat the Soviet Union as an equal, that the two countries have equal amounts of "saintliness" and " perfidy" in their actions. In this context he has equated the US action in Lebanon with the Soviet action in Hungary. He has also attempted to depict the Soviet Government as a

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benevolent one which treats generously such deposed leaders as Molotov and is gradually "democratizing" the USSR. He campaigns for an end to nuclear weapons tests. When asked about the demonstrations along his route by Hungarian and other refugee groups, he has attempted to convince his audiences that he regards not only the nature of these demonstrations but also the ideas they represent as not typically American.

There has been no indication in the papers reviewed that Mr. Mikoyan has been engaged on such fundamental issues that divide the US and the USSR as the aggressive aims of international Communism and the subversive activities of Communist parties outside the Soviet bloc.

Mikoyan's Conversations with Secretary Dulles and the Vice President

The following topics were discussed: the general problem of improving US-Soviet relations, the international Communist movement, Germany and the Berlin crisis, dependability of agreements with the USSR, US and Soviet attitudes toward war and aggressive actions, nuclear test suspension, desirability of contacts, peaceful competition, Hungarian uprising, the Kersten amendment, Soviet leadership, provocative public statements, missing American airmen, US and USSR domestic stability, Soviet desire for "equality" on international committees.

Talking Points

1. The United States Government is firmly determined to honor its obligation to provide security to the people of West Berlin. This position is understood and supported by both political parties and by the American people as a whole.

2. As American troops in West Berlin pose no menace to the security of the USSR or East Germany, Soviet efforts to force them from Berlin make us question Soviet motives in threatening our Berlin position.

3. Americans are prepared to defend their national interests and those of their allies wherever they are threatened by aggressive actions. Our actions in the Middle Eastern and Taiwan straits crises testify to that.

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4. We are concerned by the apparent Soviet willingness to precipitate these situations which might easily lead to the outbreak of global war. Our efforts should be directed instead to minimizing the danger of a world war by seriously negotiating our differences.

5. Contrary to the views of some, the existence of a Communist system within the USSR does not, in our view, make settlements impossible.

The activities of the organized international Communist movement, supported by the power and resources of the Soviet state and dedicated to the proposition that all non-Communist governments must be replaced, by violence if necessary, does give us concern. We are not worried over Communism in our own country but Communist attempts at subversion elsewhere in the world are a major source of friction and make the achievement of basic settlements with the Soviet Union difficult.

6. We find incomprehensible Mr. Mikoyan's expressed desire for better relations between the US and the USSR in the light of the constant drumfire of Soviet Government-controlled communications media against the US endeavoring to discredit it and viciously accusing it of almost every form of reprehensible international conduct.

7. We must seek diligently for solutions to our differences as continued tension between us carries with it constant danger of global war which in the present advanced stage of destructive weapons would be a catastrophe for mankind.

8. Our agreement on cultural exchanges is a small but hopeful beginning. We are gratified that progress has been made in putting into effect our agreement on cultural exchanges and that in 1959 the peoples of our countries will have the opportunity to attend the important exhibitions in Moscow and New York depicting the life of our two countries.

9. Progress in the field of disarmament is sorely needed. We consider that adequate inspection and control is

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a fundamental element of any meaningful agreement on arms limitation. Repeated Soviet rejection of adequate inspection and control measures, which would apply to all signatory powers equally, raises doubts in our minds that the Soviet Union is seriously interested in reaching broad agreements in this field.

10. The US is seriously interested in reaching agreement on the suspension of nuclear testing. This should become amply clear to all in the course of the Geneva talks in the near future. We hope that the Soviet Union will demonstrate equal readiness to negotiate seriously on remaining points of difference. We also hope that progress can be made in discussion of the problem of prevention of surprise attack. The United States is giving full consideration to the ways in which this can be made possible. A constructive start in these fields would provide an effective means for moving toward agreement on still more meaningful disarmament measures and also create an atmosphere which would be helpful as we approach other problems.



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